

## PACIFIC HEIGHTS (15)

Michael Keaton, Melanie Griffith, Matthew Modine

FoxVideo

Yuppie couple Drake Goodman (Modine) and Patty Palmer (Griffith) mortgage themselves up to their last red cent to buy and renovate a large Victorian house in photogenic San Francisco, but property speculation is not as easy a way of making money as they thought...

To make ends meet, they decide to rent two apartments out in the house, one to a pleasant Japanese couple, the other to a wealthy, seemingly friendly and likeable sort, Carter Hayes (Keaton).

Perfect tenant he is not, as the pair are to discover, and when his promised rent money does not ever appear, they find their house roaming with cockroaches he has bred, and are kept awake at night by strange banging and thumping sounds coming from his quarters.

Mad with rage at Carter's non payment and strange habits of never answering the door and constantly disappearing, Drake attacks Carter one day, and finds himself up for assault, potentially owing



# Don't let a nut into your home

his tenant far more than he is due in back payment for the apartment!

To make matters worse, Patty miscarries the baby she was expecting and when they

finally come to evict Hayes, he's disappeared...

A marvellously tense affair "Pacific Heights" only lets itself down by incorporating a rushed, overly horrific ending.

**Left: Melanie Griffith and Michael Keaton in "Pacific Heights".**

Up until then, the excitement is well contained by a tightly plotted storyline by Daniel Payne and a trio of finely honed performances.

Although Keaton's role is at times slightly overdone (how could a man who looks so normal yet plays with razor blades and tortures cockroaches be anything but a raving lunatic?), he gives a menacing portrayal of an utter looney which makes for a nice contrast with the cutesy Drake and Patty.

We are never really given a reason as to why Carter is so deranged...maybe there isn't one and he's just a born nutter!

Directed by veteran John Schlesinger and with a supporting cast including the likes of Laurie Metcalf ("Roseanne"), Carl Lumbly ("Cagney And Lacey") and Griffith's real life mother Tippi Hedren (remember "The Birds" from years back?), "Pacific Heights" is a compelling if marginally flawed psychodrama for the discerning. **CK**

★★★½

# Laugh at this house of horrors

## HOUSE IV (15)

Terri Treas, Scott Burkholder, Melissa Clayton, William Katt

Medusa Pictures Video

Before you're tempted to say, 'Oh no, not another sequel' and turn the page, pause a while.

Although "House IV" isn't the greatest horror/comedy you'll ever have the pleasure of seeing, it is far better than many on offer at the moment, with some good special effects, some darkly humorous one liners and tongue-in-cheek performances from an okay cast. Shame it's let down by such an unnecessarily sentimental ending.

Roger Cobb (Katt) and his wife Kelly (Treas) are in charge of a dilapidated old house left to him by his late grandfather. They're wondering what they can do with it, since Roger doesn't want to sell up, not even to his businessman stepbrother Burke (Burkholder), who seems *strangely* keen for

Roger to do just that.

On their way home with loathsomely cute teen daughter Laurel (Clayton), the Cobbs' car spins off the road and although Kelly and her daughter escape, poor Roger is not so lucky. Burnt to a cinder in the fire when the car explodes, he later dies in hospital.

A few weeks later, Kelly

decides to go and live in the creepy old house, thinking it will be a fine place to dwell once it's cleaned up a bit. But somebody has other ideas, as no sooner than the surviving Cobbs have moved in, strange things start happening...as the shower runs with blood instead of water, pizzas develop singing faces before Kelly's eyes and weird noises

emanate from the basement.

What exactly is responsible for the trouble? Are supernatural forces at work or are more earthly beings behind the eerie goings on at the Cobb household?

"House IV" is all of course very silly fare, with a plot whose developments are signposted in capital letters for the hard of thinking and paperthin characterisations. But having said that, it's enormously good fun if you're in the mood for something extremely easy on the old grey matter. The scene in which Terri Treas stabs a singing pizza to death is a real scream and the film's worth watching for that sequence alone!

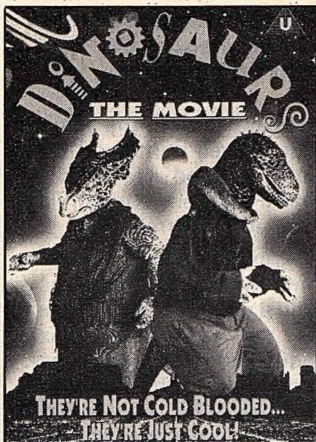
In a pretty lean time for shocks/comedy, "House IV" looks like being a most desirable property for all fantasy buffs! It's inept but hugely entertaining fare. **CK**

★★★½

**Left: more comic chills in store in the darkly humorous "House IV".**







## WIN A copy of "Dinosaurs" and a cuddly toy!

**K**ids large and small will delight to the latest release from Guild Home Video which looks set to put those decidedly unfashionable turtles right in their place!

"Dinosaurs" combines live action and puppetry to make an entertaining whole for the children as a group of feisty kids battle to save a gang of dinosaurs' homeland from destruction.

Thanks to those kind-hearted folk at Guild, we've got 10 copies of the video, plus 10 "Dinosaur" cuddly toys, five large, five not so large, just crying out to be won in this altogether marvy competition. It's not often you get a really decent family film these days, so "Dinosaurs" should entertain all age groups superbly.

To win a toy or tape, just tell us the names of two dinosaurs.

Drop your answer (on a postcard or sealed down envelope, please, opening all those envelopes make my poor fingers ever so tired) in the mail to arrive by Monday 4 November, 1991, to: "Dinosaurs Competition", "Film & Video—The Magazine", Suite C, Elsinore House, 43 Buckingham Street, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2NQ.

The first ten correct answers nab a tape, the next ten a cuddly toy.



**B**ryan Brown's problem in making "FX2: The Deadly Art Of Illusion" wasn't getting his energy level up, but holding the special effects guys down.

"You'd talk to an effects man about working on 'FX2' and he'd go, great, great," says Bryan. "He's got visions of blowing up Hollywood, so you go hey, listen, we want small and simple here. What we're showing is how something works, not the gigantic effects. So they'd say oh, I want to do big explosions and trains going through buildings. I'd say, this isn't what movies about, it's got to be done a different way. So people had to be pulled back before they went too far".

So "FX2" took shape, the sequel to the 1986 hit, in which an innocent special effects wizard uses his expertise to beat the bad guys.

Filmed in Toronto and New York in mid-1990, "FX2" reunites Australian star Brown with Brian Dennehy, who plays Brown's buddy, an ex-cop turned private investigator.

Brown helped plan most of the special effect sequences in which he again must out-wit the heavies, while finding it difficult to sort out who are the good and bad guys.

Brown's big screen roles have been overshadowed by his appearances on TV. The

# STAYING TRUE TO 0Z...

43 year old from Sydney is still best known for his parts in the hugely successful mini series "The Thorn Birds", and "A Town Called Alice", this despite being in the big movie hits "Cocktail" with Tom Cruise and "Gorillas In The Mist", alongside Sigourney Weaver. Brown has also won the Australian Academy Award for best supporting actor, when he played a Boer War military officer in the film "Breaker Morant".

In "The Thorn Birds", Brown played a man who lost his wife to a priest. Playing his wife was English actress, Rachel Ward, and in real life, the two of them married, after they fell in love on set.

That was eight years ago

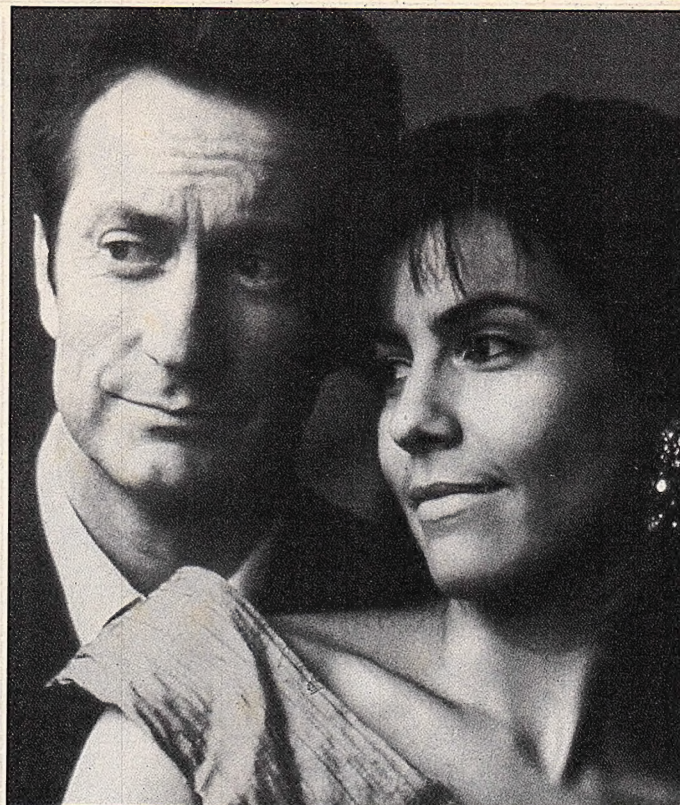
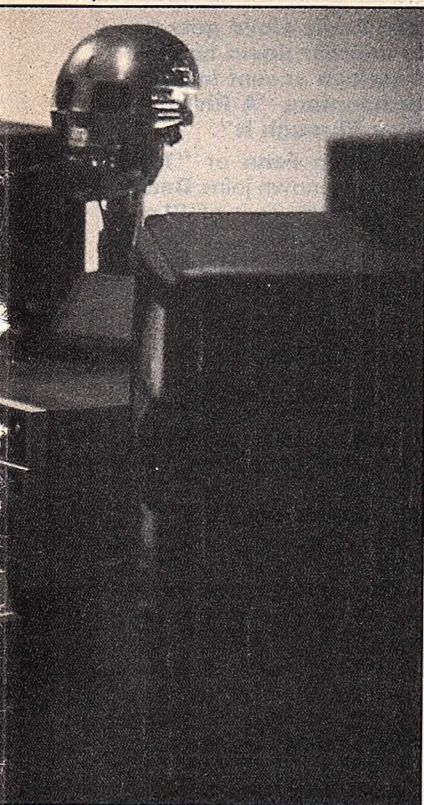
and the couple now have two daughters, Rosie, six and Matilda, four. They live in a beach house in a North Sydney suburb and they occasionally retreat to a working cattle ranch they own, a good six hour drive into the outback.

Brown has only worked with his wife on two occasions, the previously mentioned "Thorn Birds" and "The Good Wife", an Aussie drama which also starred their good friend, Sam Neill.

There are no plans for another joint project but Bryan says, "Sure we'd like to work together again, but you've got to wait for something that's right to do. In a way, we're always work-

Bryan Brown talks to Paul Ives about FX2





# FX2

THE DEADLY ART OF ILLUSION

CERT 15

**BRYAN BROWN**  
**BRIAN DENNEHY**  
**RACHEL TICOTIN**  
**JOANNA**  
**GLEASON**

ORION PICTURES

## PLOT

**F**ive years have passed since ace film special effects man Rollie Tyler (Brown) joined forces with cop Leo McCarthy (Dennehy) in the original "FX" and much water has flowed under the proverbial bridge since the duo's first outing.

Rollie is now a high-tech toymaker, inventing all sorts of wonderfully gimmicky trinkets for the child of above average pocket money to acquire.

But Rollie's toymaking activities are curtailed when the police ask the past master of illusion manufacture to set up a trap to catch a Peeping Tom killer. At first, he's reluctant to help, but eventually agrees...with disastrous consequences.

For girlfriend Kim's (Ticotin) cop and ex-husband Mike (Tom Mason) is killed in the snare Rollie helped set up. Distraught, Rollie joins forces with the one man he knows will help him, McCarthy, now a private detective.

Together, they unearth more than a small amount of corruption on the NYPD force...

## OPINION

**A**s sequels go, ie, normally not too well, "FX2: The Deadly Art Of Illusion" is watchable, entertaining fare, if all a bit obvious and silly in the long run.

There are some good chase scenes, including one in which Rollie wards off a would-be assassin around a supermarket, some clever special effects to keep you watching and two nicely tongue in cheek performances from the two Brians to boot.

Good undemanding fun for the teen/young adult audience if no cinematic masterpiece. **CK**

★★★½

**Above: Bryan as special effects supremo Rollie Tyler seen with "FX2" screen girlfriend Kim (Rachel Ticotin). Above left: Rollie at work with his banks of TVs in the entertaining "FX2: The Deadly Art Of Illusion".**

alongside Dudley Moore and Patsy Kensit.

"I play a hired hit man who finds the life a bit lonely," he says. The film is a comedy of errors, and mixed up messages. Brown is one of three people who go to Venice for separate reasons, but all for information. Brown awaits the name of his next target but gets the wrong message and things go on from there.

The movie is set for release in the USA in November and it's been getting a good reaction at its previews.

Brown takes his family with him wherever he works and it's the same when his wife works:

"The whole gypsy thing about acting was appealing", he comments. "I didn't realise it was going to be a matter of kids under the arm and America, London, Africa, Jamaica and Italy and everywhere else to go to because of work, though. It's gone really well. It's a good life and I love it".

ing together. We take scripts that each of us get offered home and bounce ideas off one another. Sometimes, this helps with changes and re-writes on one we've chosen to do. It's good support."

Showbiz being what it is, Brown and family touch down in Hollywood at regular intervals, but this hasn't led to a move there.

Brown says, "I have thought about it, but I just can't. Some reason, whether it be the fact that I'm fifth generation Australian or just nervous is stopping me. Something made me go, you just can't turn your back on what gave you these chances".

Brown's move into acting was pretty quick. The bug bit when he was working at an insurance company in his early 20s and wandered into a drama club in search of something away from the treadmill.

Brown comments, "The funny thing is that, from the very first moment they gave me some lines and said, read that and pretend you're this, I had never been so stimulated in my life. I know I had to give it a go, but I was scared to do it because I'd never known an Australian actor. I came from an area of the world where the word didn't make any sense, because you never had a face that fitted it."

He became a full time actor at 25 and came to our shores to work on the stage for a couple of years. With some good experience under his belt, he returned to Australia to find the film industry on a high and he became one of the major players in the resurgence down under.

Bryan remembers tips he was given. He says, "One of the first things people said to me was, oh, you'll have to lose that accent, develop an American one or something. I just refused to do that and said if that's what it is, then I'll just have to say no to an international career. What seemed my strength as an actor is how you express yourself. How you do it yourself is what you have to offer. So I felt that if my voice was taken from me, I would be a nothing actor. So I've pursued things my way and it's worked out all right. Now kids at home see Mel Gibson, Paul Hogan, Nicole Kidman, Sam Neill, people like that and they can say, now I can be an artist on my own terms".

After "FX2", Brown has two other movies coming up. He stars with American actress Karen Allen in "Street Talker", a romantic comedy set in Australia, which he also produced. The bigger of the two is "Blame It On The Bellboy", where Brown stars

acting and why he won't leave Australia



**Robert Redford** picks up the director's mantle once again, for **"A River Runs Through It"**, a film adaptation of Norman Maclean's acclaimed novel. The plot is set in 1920s Montana and follows the story of two brothers, their strict Presbyterian father and fly fishing (!) **Craig Sheffer** and **Brad Pitt** are billed to star as the two young men, with our own **Emily Lloyd** and **Tom Skerritt** also in the cast...

★ ★ ★

**Harrison Ford** stars as a business executive hunting down his daughter's kidnappers in **"Night Ride Down"**, a tense thriller shooting from September...

★ ★ ★

**Steven Seagal**, the pony-tailed martial arts hero, has just signed for **"Dreadnaught"**, but the high tech thriller is experiencing some decidedly choppy waters at the time of writing. Director **John Milius** has left the set and a replacement is currently being sought for the film's scheduled October start date. Scouts say the film is something like **"Die Hard"** set on an aircraft carrier...

★ ★ ★

**Natasha Richardson** joins **Lou Diamond Phillips** for **"Touch"**. Tasha's dad **Tony** directs this film version of Elmore Leonard's novel about a faith healer...

**Jeff Bridges** has signed to star in **"American Heart"**. The drama follows the fortunes of an ex-convict who attempts to rekindle his relationship with his estranged 14 year old son...

**Willem Dafoe** and **Susan Sarandon** are currently engaged on the dramatic thriller **"Light Sleeper"** for director/writer **Paul Schrader**...

★ ★ ★

Principal photography has already commenced on **"1st Force"**, an action/adventure romp starring **Robert Loggia** and **David Carradine**. The picture is filming on location at the Camp Pendleton Marine Base in Oceanside, California, and according to the film's makers, this is the first movie for more than 20 years to earn the support and co-operation of the United States Marine Corps...

**Woody Harrelson** of **"Cheers"** fame stars in **"White Men Can't Jump"**, a basketball drama also featuring **Wesley Snipes** and **Rosie Perez**...



## Emily to star in Robert's "River"

**James Woods** and **Dolly Parton** together on screen? Sounds an unlikely double act, I know, but it's one we'll be seeing in the forthcoming **"Straight Talk"** for Touchstone. Buxom Dolly plays a talk radio host in the upcoming production...

★ ★ ★

**Morgan Freeman**, **Armin Mueller-Stahl** and **Sir John Gielgud** have joined the set of **"The Power Of One"**, now lensing in Zimbabwe. The drama is based on Bryce Courtenay's best selling novel...

★ ★ ★

**Nicolas Cage** update! Our cockroach crunching hero of **"Vampire's Kiss"** infamy pops up as a drifter in **"Red Rock West"**, scheduled to shoot from November onwards. His character is mistaken for a hired killer and

when the real assassin arrives, there's hell to pay...

★ ★ ★

The quiet of late **Tom Hanks** is set to appear as the coach of a women's baseball team in **"A League Of Their Own"**, now lensing in Indiana. The all girl squad is captained by **Debra Winger**, with **Demi Moore**, **Ally Sheedy** most recently seen in the pretty good **"Fear"** reviewed a while back, and maybe **Madonna** in the lineup...

★ ★ ★

Oscar-winning **Kevin Costner** teams up with songstress **Whitney Houston** for **"The Bodyguard"**, scheduled to begin filming in November. The thriller is to be directed by Britain's own **Mick Jackson**, recently at the helm for Steve Martin's bittersweet **"LA Story"**...

Left: **Emily Lloyd** gets to do another down home American accent in the forthcoming **"A River Runs Through It"**.

**Sherilyn Fenn** of **"Twin Peaks"** renown joins **Danny Aiello** in the cast of **"Love Field"** (otherwise known as **"Jack Ruby"**), based on the real life story of JFK's assassin's assassin...

★ ★ ★

Now shooting in San Francisco is psychothriller **"Final Analysis"** starring **Richard Gere**, **Kim Basinger**, **Uma Thurman** and Julia's brov **Eric Roberts**...

**Lou Gossett Jnr** and **Bruce Dern** jet off to Atlanta, GA, to commence work on the TV mystery **"Carolina Skeletons"**...

★ ★ ★

**Zach Galligan** of **"Gremlins"** fame and Russian actor **Alexander Godunov** have signed for **"Waxwork II: Lost In Time"**, the sequel to British director **Anthony Hickox's** cult hit **"Waxwork"**...

While we're on the subject of sequels, principal photography has just been completed on **"House Party 2"**, due for release in the States this Winter. The film reunites original cast members like rappers **Kid'n'Play**, **Martin Lawrence**, **Full Force** and **Tisha Campbell**...

★ ★ ★

**"Don't Look Now's"** steamy couple **Julie Christie** and **Donald Sutherland** are paired together again in **"The Railway Station Man"**. Christie appears as an Irish widow who finds love when an eccentric American (Kiefer's dad) takes up residence in the local railway station...

★ ★ ★

**Gus Van Sant**, whose **"Drugstore Cowboy"** we at "F & V" absolutely loved, is all set to direct **"Even Cowgirls Get The Blues"**. **Gary Oldman's** missus **Uma Thurman** is marked in to star as a poor but darned beautiful Virginian lady in this adaptation of the Tim Robbins' (not the actor!) novel...

Before that, Van Sant directs the enigmatically entitled **"My Own Private Idaho"**, which may feature the classic **B-52's** track **"Private Idaho"** as part of its soundtrack. The film tells the story of the friendship between two young drifters...